

# The Eagle & The Crescent

Vol. 1, Issue 2.1

Transition to Self-Reliance

Aug. 19, 2005

## ISF arrive at dam, look to the future

**Lance Cpl. Marc Fencil**  
*2nd Marine Division*

HADITHA DAM, Iraq -- The first wave of Iraqi Security Forces arrived here marking a large step toward the transition of local control from coalition forces to the country's own forces.

Although the Iraqi troops do not conduct missions independently, the soldiers conduct daily joint patrols with Marines from 3rd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 2, 2nd Marine Division.

"More training for the officers is necessary before the Iraqis will conduct operations independent of the Marines," said Army Capt. Greg T. Brown, a 15-year veteran responsible for advising the Iraqi Security Force.

The integration of the Iraqis into Marine patrols presented Brown and the Marines challenges. Iraqi officers involved themselves in every facet of military operations during the Saddam regime; a stark contrast to the small-unit leadership that is the foundation of the Marine Corps.

"This top down leadership is the greatest challenge in shaping these forces into an effective fighting force," explained 43-year-old Brown. "The lowest [ranking] individuals in the platoon should know the details."

A formidable hurdle is the language barrier between Marines and Iraqi soldiers. Only some of the Iraqi squad leaders speak English, making it difficult to effectively communicate between forces.

Despite these challenges, the Iraqi



*Lance Cpl. Marc Fencil*

Army Capt. Greg T. Brown, Iraqi Col. Muhammed, Lt. Col. Lionel B. Urquhart and an Arabic translator pour over the details of a map. Matched up squad for squad with Marines, Iraqi Security Forces provide extra boots on the ground with a natural understanding of Arabic language and culture.

presence is regarded as a long-awaited asset for 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines. These soldiers bring more than just extra boots on the ground; they also bring a natural understanding of Arabic and the culture. Translators are used for everything from the effective resolution of property claims to interaction with the local population on patrols.

Besides conquering the language barrier between coalition forces and the Iraqi people, the ISF are able to pick up on intelligence clues Marines may overlook.

"Their ability to pick up dialects is a real bonus. They can tell right away

whether a certain individual belongs in the area," said Brown, a native of Hammond, Ind.








Marines and Iraqis are currently paired up squad for squad for the ISF to observe and emulate Marine tactics. Approximately half of the Iraqi soldiers served in the armed forces during Saddam's rule, but the remainder have little military training. Recruits in the ISF complete a four-week training period in the town of Taiji for their version of basic training.

While it is obvious to even the casual

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FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
 Low: 85F High: 112F	 Low: 83F High: 112F	 Low: 81F High: 112F	 Low: 81F High: 105F
Sunrise 0632D Sunset 1948D	Sunrise 0633D Sunset 1947D	Sunrise 0634D Sunset 1946D	Sunrise 0634D Sunset 1945D
 99%	 98%	 95%	 89%

By Gunnery Sgt. Steven L. Saxton

## Camp Fallujah

### MWR events

Billiards night: Come out to the recreation center tonight and compete in a billiards tournament starting at 8 p.m.

Country night: Saturday at 9:30 p.m. until 1 a.m. Come by the recreation center and dance to your favorite country songs.

Horseshoes: Sunday at 7 p.m.

Movie night: Movie played nightly at 8 p.m.

Spades night: Compete in a game of spades with friends at 8:30 p.m.

For more information, contact the MWR supervisor: crystal.nadeau@halliburton.com

### A message to

#### The Eagle & The Crescent readers

To the readers of The Eagle & The Crescent: Many of us have been frustrated that the international news media is not telling the full story of what is happening in Iraq. A recent NY Times article notes that editors have taken notice and will endeavor to provide a fuller picture of what is happening in Iraq. However, the II MEF (Fwd) website, The Eagle & The Crescent, and other in-theater publications continue to be an effective means for folks back home to learn more about the successes of the men and women of II MEF (Fwd).

To help expand our reach, we ask that you send TE&TC to your friends and families and ask them to pass it along to others. In addition, we ask that you put a link to the II MEF (Fwd) public website on your e-mails. These two simple actions will help spread the word about the sacrifices, dedication and hard work of our Marines, Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen and our collective efforts to accomplish a challenging but worthwhile mission. Thank you all for your service and your continued support.

Lt. Col. Dave Lapan  
Director, II MEF (FWD) Public Affairs  
cepaowo@cemnf-wiraq.usmc.mil

### II Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD)

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Sgt. Maj. Gary W. Harris, Sergeant Major

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The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense. It is for information only and is not considered directive in nature.

### Chaplain's Corner:

## Is it roses or thorns?



### Chaplain (Lt. j.g.) Leslie Hatton Naval Mobile Construction Bn. 1

I overheard a troop the other day talking about how bad the conditions were here.

"The food is horrible, the racks are uncomfortable, and everything around here is ugly." The sad part was this troop in particular was getting ready to be moved to another base location worse than the one he was at.

This got me to thinking about our situation and how we each react to it.

Life can deal some rough cards to you from time to time. You can get stuck on a detachment site which is not in the best conditions. You might have bills come up that hit you blind-sided. Your kids or wife might get sick at home and you might not be able to be there to help them out. The bottom line is that you often have very little control over your situation. You do not get to pick your situation.

However, there is hope. You do get to pick your attitude toward your situation. You can choose how you are going to react to it. You can choose to let it get you down or to let it built you up.

I believe God is always in control and is trying to teach us something in every situation. We can learn the easy way, or we can take that lesson again. Albert Einstein said insanity is to do the same thing over and expect different results.

In every time in my life, there was a lesson I could learn, even from the rough times. I might need to grow in maturity. I might need to learn more patience. Ask yourself, what can I learn in this situation? What would God want me to learn during this period in my life?

One of the chaplains here spoke about "mining for meaning." That is what we need to do. We need to review what we are feeling and see why it hurts so badly. Normally this will reveal where we are lacking or where we need to grow.

Well, I hope this helps. I hope you are looking for the rose in the thorn bush, instead of noticing only the thorns. I hope you find yourself taking each situation, good and bad, and having a new perspective on those situations. The day we die is the day we stop learning, so learn from every day's events.

## Fallujah Church Service Schedule

### PROTESTANT WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday:

Protestant Worship 9 a.m. CLB-8 theater

Protestant Communion 9:15 a.m. Base Chapel

Contemporary Worship 10:30 a.m. Base Chapel

Gospel Service 1 p.m. Base Chapel

Latter Day Saints (Mormon) 8:30 a.m. Camp Inchon/

RCT Fellowship Center

Latter Day Saints (Mormon) 6:30 p.m. Camp Inchon/

RCT Fellowship Center

### CATHOLIC MASS / CONFESSIONS

Catholic Confession Sun. 7:15 a.m. Base Chapel

Catholic Mass Sun. 8 a.m. Base Chapel

Catholic Mass Mon. 6 p.m. Base Chapel

Catholic Mass Tues. 6 p.m. Base Chapel

Catholic Mass Wed. 10:30 p.m. DFAC-1 TV Room

Catholic Mass Wed. 6 p.m. Base Chapel

Catholic Mass Thurs. 6 p.m. Base Chapel

Catholic Mass Fri. 6 p.m. Base Chapel

Catholic Confession Sat. 5:15 p.m. Base Chapel

# Texas native makes difference in Iraq

**Staff Sgt. Ronna M. Weyland**  
*II Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD)*

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- During a time when many question a female's role in combat, a South Texas Marine with 2nd Marine Division strives at making a difference during her time in Iraq.

"I want to be in a job where I am making a difference," said Lance Cpl. Estrella R. Adams, multi-channel radio operator, Wire Shop, S-6, Regimental Combat Team 8. "I felt like I was making a difference when I was working the [entry control point] searching females."

The McAllen, Texas, native has spent more than three months on the Female Search Team in Fallujah, Iraq since arriving here in March.

"Some people [Iraqis] don't want us there, but most are glad

we are there to help," said Adams of her experiences on the search team.

A graduate of Memorial High School, Adams said she was a good student and stayed out of trouble. However, she was looking for a better way of life when she decided to join the Corps.

Since joining at the age of 18 in May 2002, Adams said she has grown-up a lot.

"It has given me more confidence and has made me realize I have the potential to do more," explained the 21-year-old.

Her oldest sister, Maria De La Rosa, 34, and a resident of McKinney, Texas agrees with the changes her sister has made.

"My sister is a better person," said De La Rosa. "The Marine Corps has given her the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of Americans, in the lives of Iraqis, in a way she may not even ever comprehend."

"The Marine Corps has made my sister a better American, has helped her call on her courage, has given her a new respect for life, and has shown her what it takes to serve a greater cause," she continued. "[It has] shown her that the very essence of who you are allows society to create obstacles for you, be it gender or race, but you have the strength within you to overcome those obstacles - being a woman in the United States Marine Corps proves that!"

De La Rosa said Adams is her hero and she has a tremendous respect for her sister.

"What greater burden to bear than serving your country?" said De La Rosa. "At the end of our days the question may be asked to each of us, what have we done to help mankind? So many will be at a loss for words, so many will know they have not done anything, so many will be ashamed...my sister will not be one of those."

Since joining the Corps, Adams has married and her husband is currently serving in Iraq as well.

Corporal Henry Adams, 29, communications electronics technician, Tow Platoon, 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, from Raceland, La., said he is proud of his wife serving her country and believes it is easier for both of them to be here at the same time than one being back in the states.

"I think it is easier having her here. We understand more what each other is going through," said Henry. "However, I am concerned about what she is up against."

He also thinks their time together has become more valuable.

"After I come back from missions outside the wire, I believe our time together is more valuable," Henry explained. "We know the time is limited so we make the most of it."

With less than a year left on her four-year enlistment, Estrella plans to attend college in Texas when her time in the Corps ends. She would eventually like to be a police officer or a social worker.

She plans to use her experiences from the Corps to her advantage.

"I have met a lot of people and learned a lot about people getting along with other people...people from different backgrounds," she said. "It has given me more confidence and has made me realize I have potential to do more."

Estrella added she will never forget her time in Iraq.

"Coming to Iraq has made me more grateful to be an American," she said.



*Staff Sgt. Ronna M. Weyland*

Lance Cpl. Estrella R. Adams, 21, multi-channel radio operator, Wire Shop, S-6, Regimental Combat Team 8, 2nd Marine Division, and a native of McAllen, Texas, has been in Iraq since March and has spent more than three months on the Female Search Team.

# II MHG mechanics keep on truckin'

**Sgt. Christi Prickett**

*II Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD)*

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- Mechanics attached to motor transport, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Headquarters Group, II MEF (Fwd) are pulling more than their fair share when it comes to the War on Terrorism.

With terrorist activities targeted at military convoys, it's important that vehicles remain in top shape for the roads of Iraq. Each part must work correctly with the next in order to help get Marines and soldiers back home safely.

The mechanics, almost all of whom worked together at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., before coming to Iraq in early

March, agree they have benefited from their deployment.

"This is my first deployment," said Lance Cpl. Benjamin A. Lantz, a 22-year-old mechanic. "I wasn't expecting to work like this, but everything is so much more hands on. Iraq gives [me] an opportunity to become a better mechanic because there are so many vehicles out here."

Coming to Iraq changed the mission of the group.

"Instead of filling duties or going to retirement ceremonies, these guys are learning hands on the importance of fixing a vehicle," said Staff Sgt. Mark A. Reller, maintenance chief, II MHG, II MEF (FWD).

Lantz didn't know what to expect before arriving.

"I thought we'd be living in tents and be bored out of our mind," he said. "Luckily, we're not living in tents, but we're definitely not bored. We're really busy."

Working on vehicles ranging from five to seven ton trucks, armored and up-armored humvees, there is a wide variety of problems that arise.

"We work on the trucks at the second echelon level," said Lantz, a Muncie, Ind., native. "That basically means that anything someone can fix on their own [privately owned vehicle], we can fix here."

Lantz isn't completely satisfied with his job though.

"I want to do more," he said. "I love being a mechanic and I really want to go to school when I get back to be able to work at a higher echelon. I joined the Marine Corps to do this."

The higher the echelon, Lantz explained, means the more a mechanic gets to do with a vehicle.

"For example," he said, "third echelon gets to take an engine out and fourth would get to rebuild an engine. That's what I want to do."

Reller, a Holland, Ind., native, said the team has fixed more than 450 vehicles of various types since they've been here.

"Considering 'by the book' turnaround time is between five and 10 days, we're doing pretty good," he said. "We have a turnaround time of about two days."

The II MHG mechanics fix vehicles from nine different units, which can easily add up for the 20-man force.

"We work with MHG, civil affairs, military police, personal security detachment, intelligence battalion, force protection battalion, and the Iraqi Security Forces," explained Reller. "That's not even all of them. And we've kept all of our units above 90 percent readiness."

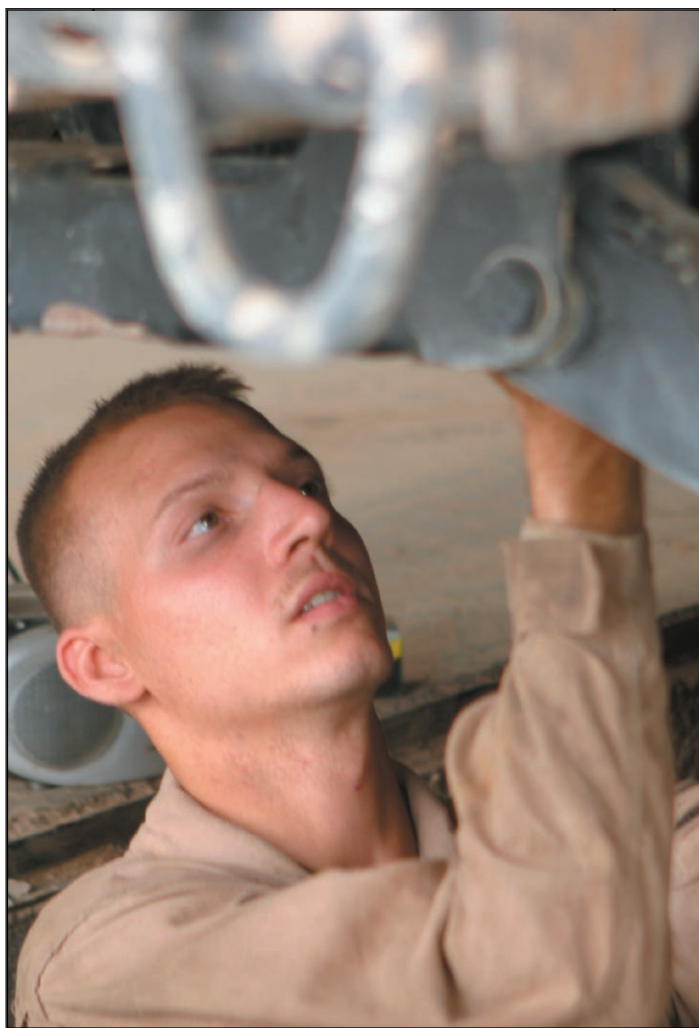
A morale booster for the mechanics is understanding the importance of their job.

"If the trucks are messed up, more Marines die," said Lance Cpl. Roman M. Goddeau, of Ballston Spa, N.Y. "Then it'd be our fault."

"We help protect lives," said Cpl. Robert M. Fletcher, a Cleveland native. "It's just part of the job."

Reller is proud of the work his Marines are doing.

"They've been doing an outstanding job," he said. "The guys work from 8 a.m. until midnight sometimes and give 100 percent."



*Sgt. Christi Prickett*

Lance Cpl. Roman M. Goddeau works on the brakes of a military vehicle while standing in the "jiffy pit." The mechanics attached to motor transport, II Marine Expeditionary Force, II Marine Headquarters Group, II MEF (FWD), work long hours and fix a variety of trucks from approximately nine units.

# Airframe mechanic keeps Gunrunners on prowl

## Cpl. C. Alex Herron

*2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (FWD)*

AL ASAD, Iraq -- In the early part of 2003, Marines and other coalition forces began their march toward Baghdad to oust the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

As ground forces led an attack through Iraq's southern deserts, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 269, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (FWD), maintained a watchful eye in the sky and responded to many calls as Marines went face-to-face with the enemy.

The Gunrunners are on their second tour in Iraq, and many of the same Marines in the squadron have returned. Lance Cpl. Teddy Brown, an airframes and hydraulics mechanic, is one of those Marines.

When his unit first arrived, in February, he served with the small detachment of Gunrunners in Al Qaim. He joined the larger portion of his squadron here a few months ago. Brown helps ensure all aircraft meet safety standards after every 200 flight hours; this is when the aircraft is pulled from the line for inspec-

tion. He's part of the phase crew, and his department has the tedious task of disassembling all the helicopters and inspecting the parts for wear before the AH-1W Super Cobras and UH-1N Hueys are put back in the air.

"We ensure the aircraft are ready for more flying by inspecting every section of it when it comes in," said the Munising, Mich., native. "I am responsible for all airframe problems. Because of the heat, I spend a lot of my time repairing cracks in the aircraft's airframe when they come in for inspection."

Brown joined the Marine Corps in 2001 after graduating Munising High School. Upon completion of his initial training, he reported to the Gunrunners and has been with them ever since.

Remembering his tour from 2003, this deployment is unlike the early stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"The first time things were a lot different than they are now," Brown said. "When we were here in 2003 we lived in tents and were truly expeditionary. We were flying an amazing amount of

sorties and dropping lots of ordnance. This time we are playing a security role. We are seeing a decrease in the number of attacks to us and a reduced amount of ordnance being used."

With the drastic change in missions, the Gunrunners are adapting.

"We are doing something right," Brown said. "We are experiencing less attacks on our base and responding to fewer troops in contact calls. We perform mainly escort missions for the Marines on the ground or other aircraft that don't have the firepower we have."

Since his first deployment, Brown became a father and has a new appreciation for families separated by war.

"I was married during the last deployment, but now I am experiencing what all the other Marine fathers do," said Brown, whose child was born in 2004. "Leaving my wife is hard enough, but now, with my son, I'm missing all kinds of firsts; from his first steps to his first birthday."

Even with a constant reminder of why he needs to get home, he stays the course and doesn't let thoughts of home distract him from the mission here.

"He is a key player on our crew," said Sgt. Raul Gibson, an airframes noncommissioned officer. "Whenever I need something done, I know I can trust him to get it done right, the first time."

As hard as it is was to leave his family, Brown only needs to remember the words of his mother to get him through the long, hot days.

"Before I left my mom said, 'Go and do your job to the best of your ability and come home,'" Brown said. "Simple words, but it was nice to see how my family understands what I have to do and is really supportive of me and my career."

With Marines like Brown who constantly put their lives on hold for the needs of the Corps, the Gunrunners continue to bring their potent punch to the fight. With the end of their deployment bearing down, they will all be able to return to their loved ones soon. Without them, the squadron would not have been as successful during their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



*Cpl. C. Alex Herron*

Lance Cpl. Teddy Brown, an airframes and hydraulics mechanic with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 269, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (FWD), and Munising, Mich., native, checks a hose inside an AH-1W Super Cobra on Aug. 11.



**There are no  
admin movements.**

**All movements are  
Combat Ops.**



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IEDs KILL

## Caught in the Spotlight

AL ASAD, Iraq -- "One thing I always wanted to do was be a Marine," said Sgt. Daniel R. Navrestad. "I said 'If I'm going to do it, now is the time to do it. I'm 20 and I need to get it done before I get too old.'"

In August 2002, the Galesville, Wis., native enlisted in the Marine Corps to realize a childhood dream. He is now supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom as the radio chief of Marine Wing Support Group 27, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (FWD).

His job is to troubleshoot, repair and maintain the radios used to monitor convoys and other personnel outside the base's perimeter, but since his arrival in February, he's gone above and beyond his duties.

Navrestad helped the Marines in the unit's communications and data department make a safer working environment in the group headquarters by replacing and rerouting more than 120 computer and telephone lines in the building. He also built wooden desks and walls in the group's combined operations center and hung plasma screens and projectors from the ceiling to help those working there accomplish their mission more efficiently.

To make life easier for those in the combined operations center, and ultimately for those outside "the wire," he added more radios to monitor all the networks under the group's responsibility.

"I don't mind being deployed," he said. "Whether it is Iraq or anywhere else it's all a different experience."

A 2000 graduate of Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau High School, Navrestad had several jobs before joining the Corps. He was a mechanic, construction worker and electrician and did masonry and lawn care before setting foot at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego.

"I always wanted to be in the military and one of the biggest reasons for that is that my dad was a Marine," he said. "He didn't want me to join, he said I wasn't going to like it, but now he's very proud of me."

His father has plenty of reasons to be proud. Navrestad is what the Marine Corps knows as a 'fast-tracker.' He left basic training as a private first class and was promoted to lance corporal two weeks after reporting to his first duty station, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, in Camp Hansen, Okinawa, Japan.

In January 2004, 17 months after enlisting, he was promoted to corporal. A year later he was promoted to his current rank. Navrestad went from private to sergeant in less than three years.

A jack-of-all-trades, Navrestad is good with his hands. Not only is he a skilled carpenter, he's also a Marine Corps Martial Arts instructor. When he's not deployed he finds time to train others who want to improve their close combat fighting capabilities.

"That's something I can give back to the Marine Corps while I'm still in," he said of his martial arts instruction.

Navrestad plans on being a Marine for years to come. "I put my re-enlistment package in and I'm re-enlisting in October," he said.

Both of his grandfathers served in the Army in the communications field, his father is a Marine veteran who worked on ejection seats and his brother and sister are in the Army. His brother, in the Army since 1997, is a heavy equipment operator and his sister, who joined in July 2002, is a food service specialist.

"My grandfather—my dad's dad—died while I was stationed in Japan," he said. "When I read his obituary I found out he was a radio operator in World War II. I'm carrying out a tradition I didn't even know about."



Sgt. Daniel R. Navrestad

# Washington state Marine provides security

**Cpl. Ruben D. Maestre**

*II Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD)*

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- The Pasco, Wash., native has not seen action in Iraq inside the massive tanks he was trained for as a tank crewman. Instead, Lance Cpl. Juan M. Ramos plays an important role as a provisional military policeman safeguarding military convoys moving everything from supplies to detainees, and has also been temporarily tasked to provide security to a dining facility here.

"We didn't know anything about being military policemen," said the newly trained military policeman of his reserve unit, 4th Tank Battalion, 4th Marine Division based in Yakima, Wash. "All we knew about was tanks because that was our primary [military occupational specialty]."

A cable technician back in the states, Ramos was activated along with others from his unit to prepare for Iraq. Before deploying to Iraq in February 2005, the Marines trained for three months on the skills, tactics and techniques of military police.

"We had to learn how to be military policeman from start to finish," said the married father of two children. "We didn't know anything about the basics of what we are doing here now [such as] convoy security, how to handle detainees, how to detain and search people, how to search vehicles, how to deal with [improvised explosive devices] and every other different situation that one comes upon as a military policeman."

Training up and then deploying to Iraq had been a big change for Ramos since graduating from Pasco High School in 2000. Drifting through several jobs, the former high school football player and wrestler was unsure of what he wanted to do, but he was interested in the military life.

"When I got out of high school I didn't exactly know what I wanted to do," said Ramos. "Before I graduated [high school] I was in a military program for a year, so I figured I'd give the Marine Corps a shot."

Ramos joined the Corps in February 2001, choosing to remain near his home-

town with his new family as a reserve Marine, but the call to duty came and off to war he went.

"I didn't want to come out, but it was something that needed to be done," said Ramos, divided by his commitments to his family and the Corps. "I knew if I didn't go, I was going to regret it later."

He has been assigned in Iraq with other tankers for more than five months to 2nd Military Police Battalion, 2nd Force Service Support Group (FWD). Ramos pointed out what he saw as progress the Marines, Iraqi Security Forces and others are making here.

"It's been a good experience because you watch the news back home and you wonder what is going on," he said. "Out here you see a lot of stuff getting done. We go back to the same place 10 times and every time we get on the roads there is security posted and on every bridge."

Ramos, who has been on dozens of convoy operations, continued making his point.

"In the five months we've been here so

far, over half of that security [on the roads] that was [U.S. military] is now being posted by the Iraqis," he said. "They are training [the ISF] and sending them out here. All you see on the news is bombing, killing and bad things happening. They never actually show the positive side."

The father of a young daughter and a two-month-old son he has not seen, Ramos said he thinks about his family every day. Yet, he values the personal sacrifices he has made and cherishes the bonds he has had the opportunity to build here while serving with others.

"I'll come back appreciating what's important and what really matters in life, like my family and my wife," said Ramos about his deployment here. "These Marines you're with now, you live close to them and you interact and see them once a month back home but here the bonds become stronger and I think that will make us better people."



*Cpl. Ruben D. Maestre*

Standing watch at a dining facility here, Lance Cpl. Juan M. Ramos, of Pasco, Wash., gives directions to a Marine sergeant here recently. Trained as a tank crewman but currently serving in Iraq as a provisional military policeman, Ramos plays a vital role safeguarding military convoys.

# Former Naval Academy QB serves in Iraq

**Petty Officer 1st Class (SW) Chad V. Pritt**  
*30th Naval Construction Regiment*

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq — They go to the U.S. Naval Academy for different reasons. High school students from all over the country put in their applications for the chance at a great education and to serve their country.

Some go to the academy for those reasons and more.

Lieutenant j.g. Brian Madden, a 2002 graduate of the Naval Academy, attended the institution as a starting quarterback for the Academy's football team, known as the Midshipmen. He played the position beginning his sophomore year through the 2001 season. He is currently deployed to Iraq with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1.

Madden jumped into his first season starting for the Midshipmen his sophomore year.

"My sophomore year I led the nation in rushing among QBs," said Madden, a Lawton, Okla., native. "I rushed for 987 my sophomore year, and 1,100 yards my senior year. I missed my junior year due to an ACL [anterior cruciate ligament] tear."

Madden received his trial by fire his sophomore year, when he started against one of the best-known names in college sports: Notre Dame.

"That was my first start," said Madden, NMCB-1's assistant supply officer. "Notre Dame's beaten us like 40 consecutive years. I went in there, in that hostile environment, and rushed for over 160 yards and we came up short. It was one of those things. We were up 24-21 with 30 seconds to play, and somehow that magic of Notre Dame beat us. It was one of my better experiences. I was able to walk in there and almost pull a big upset. I think that'll go down as one of my best moments, because nobody expected anything from me and it was the start of my career."

Madden, who has played football since he was 10 years old, graduated from the Academy with a bachelor's of science degree in economics.

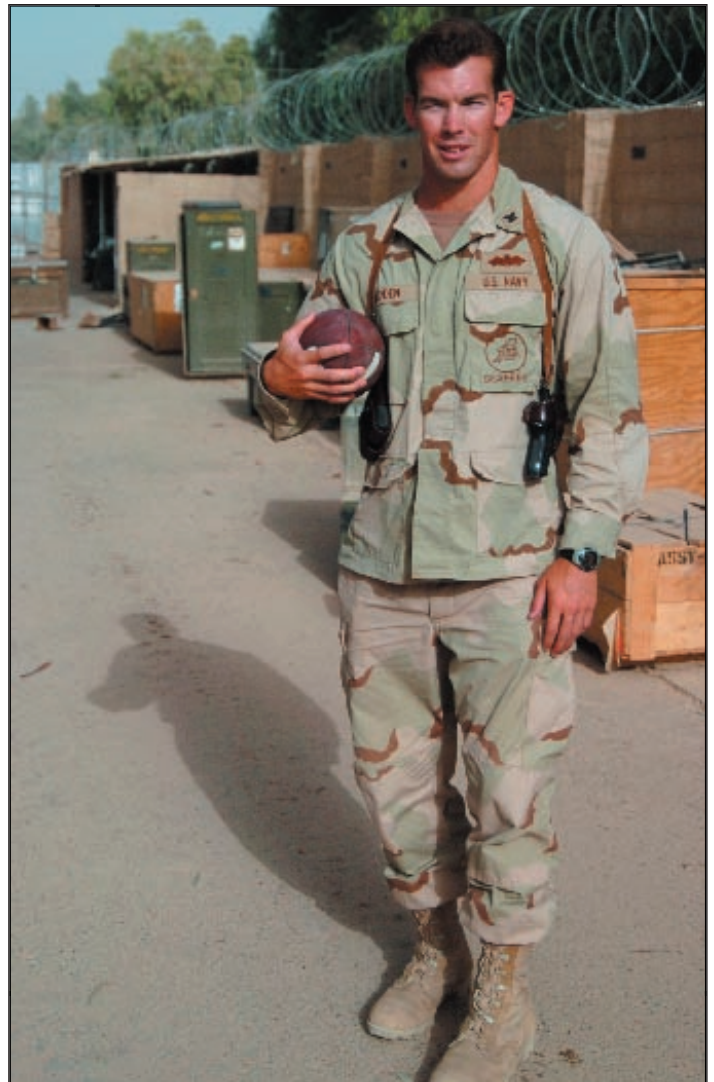
"I had no idea that I'd go to the Naval Academy," said Madden, who was approached by an Academy scout his senior year in high school. "I grew up in Oklahoma and [Oklahoma] Sooners football was big. I was a senior in high school and the Naval Academy looked like the best option. They were coming off a great season and graduating their quarterback and I thought I could step in there and play, with a combination of a great education and the opportunity at a great job as a Naval officer. I got to meet a lot of great guys and graduate from a prestigious institution like the Naval Academy."

The world of college football, with the largest fan base among college sports, features some of the most intense rivalries: Boston College vs. Notre Dame; Cornell vs. Pennsylvania; and Navy vs. Army. The Army-Navy's 115-year-old rivalry is one of the oldest in college football.

"Obviously Army-Navy is a huge rivalry," Madden said. "You've got millions of people rooting for it one way or the other."

"In a time we're in today, with the patriotic nation we live in, people are looking for young leaders to succeed in this kind of atmosphere [in Iraq]. I think those are the kind of situations that help you be able to manage and be a leader in a contingency environment. Those kind of atmospheres really prep you because you're under a lot of stress and you've got to be able to perform, like out here."

Madden and NMCB-1 are currently deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom providing engineering support throughout the Al Anbar province.



*Petty Officer 1st Class Chad V. Pritt*

Lieutenant j.g. Brian Madden of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1, former quarterback for the Naval Academy, is currently serving in Iraq as an assistant supply officer for the battalion.

## Dam, from Page 1

observer much more work is needed before becoming self-sufficient, the ISF has been experiencing both isolated and widespread success.

Recently, Iraqi forces joined with Marines in the city of Hit during Operation Sword, and now live and work in the city providing their citizens a permanent Iraqi soldier and Marine presence.

Marines are aware the Iraqis will eventually assume complete responsibility for their country's security but until then, they will

continue to provide critical support and aid on operations with Marines as they continue improving their combat skills.

"Already, we are seeing an increase in the information that locals are bringing forth as a result of having soldiers who can effectively communicate with the people," said Brown. "Before, the locals just gave us the stone face.

"They are here for good and to show the locals that soon there will be a permanent face, and that will be of the Iraqi Security Forces," Brown concluded.

# CLB-8 Marines awarded Purple Heart

**Lance Cpl. Joshua C. Cox**

*II Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD)*

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- Four Marines from Combat Logistics Battalion 8 were awarded the Purple Heart in front of a large unit formation in a ceremony held here Aug. 14.

Four of the five Marines injured in two separate incidents in and around the city of Fallujah were on hand to attend the ceremony.

Lance Cpl. Kodie C. Misiura, Logistics Vehicle System operator, 1st Platoon, Charlie Company, CLB-8, 2nd Force Service Support Group (FWD), earned the award for wounds received when a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device struck the 7-ton truck she was being transported in. Misiura was traveling back to Camp Fallujah from an entry control point when the explosion occurred June 23.

Lance Corporals Nathaniel D. Rogers, Selwyn O. Wyatt III, Cpl. Brian R. Pierce and Sgt. Mark Chaffia earned the award for wounds received when an improvised explosive device struck their tactical vehicle July 12. At the time of the blast, the four Marines were conducting a patrol on the outskirts of Fallujah, searching vehicles and hunting for weapons caches.

Chaffia, vehicle commander and squad leader, Military Police, CLB-8, 2nd FSSG (FWD), was evacuated to

the United States where he is recovering from injuries received in the explosion, and was presented the medal while in recuperation.

The remaining Marines were recognized during the ceremony held here.

"It's the second oldest award in the Marine Corps," said Pierce, artillery mechanic, Maintenance Company, CLB-8, 2nd FSSG (FWD). "So it feels great that I can still walk and talk about it."

Rogers, radio operator, Radio Platoon,

Communications Company, CLB-8, 2nd FSSG (FWD), said he was proud to serve his country.

"I get to do what 99 percent of our country can't or won't do, and I'm proud of it," said the Winston-Salem, N.C., native. "I'm proud to have shed a little blood for my country."

Since deploying, CLB-8 has awarded seven Purple Hearts to Marines who have been injured supporting combat operations here.



*Lance Cpl. Joshua C. Cox*

A Marine is awarded the Purple Heart stands at the position of attention during a ceremony held Aug. 14 here. Four Marines from Combat Logistics Battalion 8, 2nd Force Service Support Group (FWD), were honored in the ceremony.